

**Marrakech  
Partnership**



**UNFCCC COP 27**

**Outcome Document**

**Action Event:**

**Blue Carbon Implementation Lab**

Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action

Wednesday, 16 November 2022

15:00-16:30

Organised by Conservation International, the High-Level Champions, Ocean-Climate Platform, IUCN, IOC-UNESCO, Blue Marine Foundation, Blue Carbon Initiative, International Partnership for Blue Carbon, WWF, Global Mangrove Alliance, ORRAA, and Plymouth Marine Laboratory

# MPGCA “Thematic”: Blue Carbon Implementation Lab

## Section 1 - Action Event

### Key Messages:

Blue carbon ecosystems – such as mangroves, seagrasses, and tidal marshes – sequester and store globally significant quantities of carbon in their biomass and underlying soils, which can be released if these ecosystems are disturbed by anthropogenic activities. In addition to climate mitigation benefits, these ecosystems provide a multitude of other services including protection from climate change impacts (e.g., extreme weather events, coastal erosion, and sea-level rise), fisheries habitat, biodiversity benefits, and livelihoods for millions of people in coastal communities.

There are numerous opportunities to strengthen ocean-climate action at the national and international level, and implementation of blue carbon conservation and restoration action plays a critical role. While an increasing number of countries are including coastal nature-based solutions in their NDCs, countries have also recognized the challenges they face in implementing their commitments. This action event highlighted the growing portfolio of blue carbon practical demonstrations, tools and science needed to achieve blue carbon goals. In addition, the Blue Carbon Implementation lab addressed the key gaps and opportunities in financing, and principles and guidance to ensure high-quality blue carbon projects.

Key takeaways from the Blue Carbon Implementation Lab included the need and growing opportunity to explore diverse financing opportunities for blue carbon conservation and restoration; the importance of community involvement in all stages of a blue carbon project, the need to engage a diverse (and traditionally siloed) set of key stakeholders from the beginning stages of a project, and principles and guidance to ensure high-quality outcomes for blue carbon credits and projects. The work of partnerships such as the Global Mangrove Alliance in bringing together stakeholders, the development of guidance for buyers and sellers on voluntary markets, and the interest from Parties in enhancing blue carbon commitments in NDCs are important factors to scale blue carbon action for climate change mitigation, adaptation, biodiversity protection, and livelihoods.

### Outcomes:

1. *Endorse and drive action aligned with the Marrakech Partnership Climate Action Pathways*

The Blue Carbon Implementation Lab focused on opportunities and challenges surrounding unlocking finance, enhancing NDC contributions, promoting high quality outcomes, and scaling

on-the-ground implementation of blue carbon ecosystem conservation and restoration to drive action aligned with the MP Climate Action Pathways.

2. *Generate Convergence around campaigns, Race to Zero, Race to Resilience, Race to Zero breakthroughs*

The Blue Carbon Implementation Lab identified key issues to unlocking blue carbon financing including decreasing silos around private, public, NGO, and community stakeholders through partnerships to secure and disperse funding. It also highlighted the [Mangrove Breakthrough](#) as a key initiative to enhance partnerships, raise ambition, and increase financing for coastal blue carbon action. The Mangrove Breakthrough is a science-based, measurable, and achievable goal for governments and non-state actors to restore and protect mangroves at the necessary scale to secure the future of these vital ecosystems. The Mangrove Breakthrough aims to protect 15 million hectares of mangroves through halting losses, restoring half of recent mangrove losses, doubling global mangrove protection, ensuring sustainable long-term finance for existing mangroves through achieving 4 billion USD in investments by 2030.

3. *Strengthen the quality and depth of dialogues and collective action between non-Party stakeholders and governments*

The Blue Carbon Implementation Lab brought together diverse government and non-Party stakeholder voices to achieve a rich discussion on blue carbon challenges and opportunities. A key outcome from the discussion was that collaborative action between Party and non-Party stakeholders can be strengthened through partnerships such as the [Global Mangrove Alliance](#), the [International Partnership for Blue Carbon](#), and the [Blue Carbon Initiative](#).

4. *Demonstrate action and evidence of transformation across diverse parties of the NPS community*

Participants highlighted financing and insurance solutions which can be used to make blue carbon projects more appealing to private sector investments, such as the development of methods to quantify the co-benefits of blue carbon restoration and conservation actions. The development of tools like the [High-Quality Blue Carbon Principles and Guidance](#) were also shared to support the development of high-impact voluntary carbon trading that achieves positive outcomes for climate, communities, and biodiversity. The [High Quality Blue Carbon Principles and Guidance](#) is a blue carbon framework to guide the development and purchasing of high-quality blue carbon projects and credits through providing a consistent and accepted framework for blue carbon credits. The five principles are: safeguard nature, empower people, employ the best information and carbon accounting principles, operate contextually and locally, and mobilize high integrity capital.

Key lessons learned in the initial round of NDC submissions have been identified and can be incorporated into NDC updates including addressing data gaps in greenhouse gas inventories and ecosystem mapping and improving implementation through capacity building.

## Section 2 - Progress and Outlook

### Overview of progress in 2022

Over the past 10 years, the foundational scientific knowledge and tools for blue carbon restoration and conservation have advanced so that blue carbon ecosystems can be included in national climate goals and receive financing from market and non-market sources. Last year in Glasgow we saw increased support by countries, the private sector, funders, and communities for blue carbon as a climate mitigation and adaptation solution.

Recently, we also saw the development of the Mangrove Breakthrough: a science-based, measurable, and achievable goal for governments and non-state actors to restore and protect mangroves at the necessary scale to secure these ecosystems for the future. The Breakthrough also aims to secure sustainable financing solutions for the \$4 billion needed to execute this goal. The development of this target will help unify efforts across sectors.

In the first round of NDC submissions, countries recognized and included blue carbon ecosystems for mitigation and adaptation purposes, and there is growing interest in diverse financing options for blue carbon action.

### Section 3 – Action during 2023

**Unlock finance.** Explore innovative financing opportunities (market- and non-market-based approaches) that can capture the benefits of blue carbon ecosystems for climate change mitigation, adaptation, biodiversity protection, and livelihoods. Work to secure sustainable financing solutions to achieve the Mangrove Breakthrough’s goal of 4 billion USD in investments by 2030. Ensure that blue carbon credits and projects achieve high-quality outcomes for climate, communities and biodiversity.

**Enhance NDC commitments.** Countries should evaluate and enhance their commitments to conserve and restore blue carbon ecosystems in their 2025 NDC updates. These commitments should set realistic, achievable targets and secure the means of implementation (finance, technology, and capacity building). Parties should seek to support synergies across relevant policy processes, including the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, Convention on Biological Diversity, and the SDGs. Additionally, they should address data gaps and promote the integration of data into national planning and decision-support systems. To promote successful NDC implementation, governments should continue to build capacity

among local governments and other key stakeholders, in partnership with groups such as the Global Mangrove Alliance, International Partnership for Blue Carbon, and Blue Carbon Initiative.

**Ensure quality in implementation.** Using guidance like the High-Quality Blue Carbon Principles and Guidance, design projects that open pathways for LCIPs and marginalized communities to equitably participate in and benefit from the voluntary carbon market. Additionally, ensure high integrity carbon accounting and project design, and restoration of ecological integrity and ecosystem resilience. Follow global mangrove restoration guidelines to increase the success rates of restoration projects.